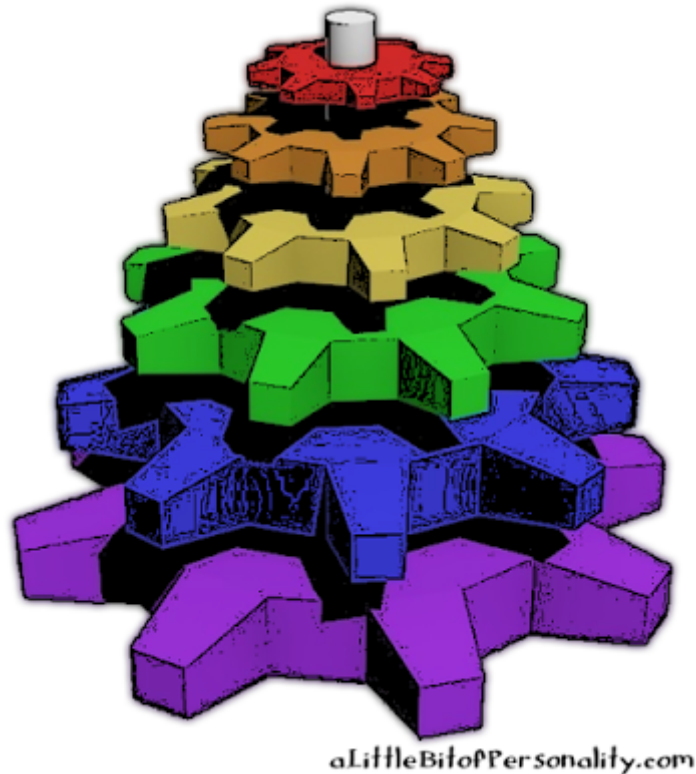


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Okay! So now we've covered a basic definition of smartness, we've derived sixteen types of smartness that can each be measured the way IQ tests measure INTP smart, and we've traced the first four stairsteps in the ascending quanta of how smartness naturally increases (or the first five steps, if you count IL 0). Now, we have one more dimension of smartness to describe, and then we can really start to use this engine to get us to the holy grail of psychology: actually curing jerkiness, pettiness, and all the timelessly persistent darker sides of human nature as we know it.

We've got sixteen types of smart and the first four levels of smart, so now...layers of smart! Imagine a stack of six gears, each stacked one atop the other (thanks to a friend of ours for this gear metaphor!). The lower gears are larger, heavier, and much harder to turn, while the higher gears are smaller, lighter, and they spin quite easily. And when any gear turns, then all the gears above it turn even faster. So naturally, if you reach down and turn the big Sixth Gear, then all the gears above it will turn faster and faster, and the little First Gear will be flying! But if you focus on turning only the First Gear, then it'll turn reasonably fast perhaps, while none of the other gears move at all.



The deeper gears represent deeper layers of how intelligence manifests in our lives, while the higher gears represent shallower, more superficial types of smart. These shallower versions of smart are still powerful, still intelligent, and yet not nearly as effective, far-reaching, or long-lasting as the intelligence of the lower gears. And when we focus on deeper kinds of smart, then we naturally grow faster and faster in all the shallower manifestations of intelligence! Any time a gear turns, that represents growing and developing in the layer of intelligence that's being turned, IL by IL in that layer of smart.

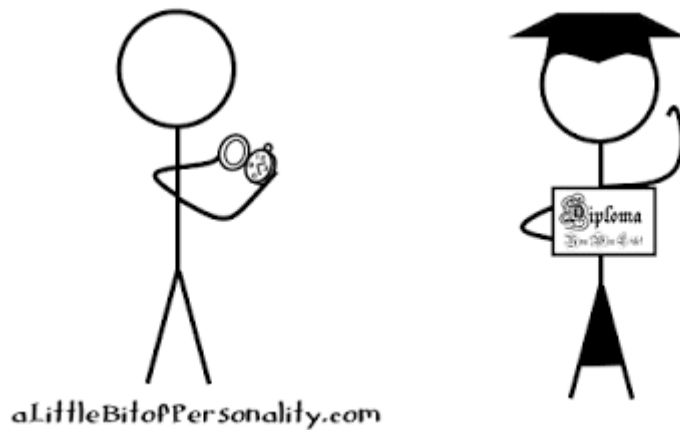
But sometimes these gears get garbage stuck in them, making it harder to turn them or any of the gears below them.

Bitterness, delusion, hatred...all the familiar and endless list of human weaknesses can end up clogging up any of our layers of intelligence. If we develop enough blockage in our Fourth Gear, for instance, then we won't be able to turn it much at all, and we won't even be able to touch our Fifth and Sixth Gears. So a heavily blocked Fourth Gear forces us to live our entire lives relying only on the comparatively small benefits offered by the First through Third Gears. We may be IL 4+ in our Second Gear, but without access to our deeper gears, we'll still be dangerously incompetent in most aspects of life; in fact we'll be more dangerous than if we had no intelligence at all, since high IL in the higher gears can become quite treacherous without the lower gears to direct it.

The First Gear – Possessions

THE FIRST GEAR

Possessions



The most superficial and external aspect of intelligence is arguably not even a part of us per se: our possessions. This includes not only material possessions, but also our reputation, our titles and degrees, our friendships and relationships, and other outward belongings that may be incredibly precious to us. This is still powerful, and it actually counts as a layer of intelligence, even though it's so outward and superficial that it may not even seem like intelligence.

But remember, intelligence is the raw ability to determine and do whatever is best, in any situation of any kind. A person with more possessions, whether in wealth, technology, social connections, or whatever, will be better able to do whatever's best, and better able to figure out what that is. Outward possessions actually follow the steps of the ILs in their progress—this is an exciting and fun topic that I particularly look forward to talking about here in Phase 2!

When we turn our First Gear, that simply represents the gain of possessions. And possessions are important; they're a layer of intelligence, and they really can make life so much better, and they can better enable us to do so much good in life.

Sometimes possessions seem like a bad thing, because without the lower gears to guide them, they can end up corrupting us rather than improving us. But it's a lack of deeper intelligence that's the problem, not some inherent evil in possessions themselves. All higher gears can be corrupting without the lower gears to direct them; even the deep Fifth Gear can be dangerous if the Sixth Gear is lacking.

People who neglect deeper layers of intelligence may live their entire lives trying to turn only the First Gear: They live to chase money, or popularity, or awards. This is difficult without the lower gears, because remember, when you turn a lower gear, all the gears above it turn even faster! So while possessions can be a powerful benefit in our lives, we can gain them far more quickly if we first focus on the lower gears, which will make our First Gear spin faster and faster. This takes discipline, however, since it's more immediately gratifying to focus on possessions directly. But the more we develop our deeper gears, the more patience, discipline, and foresight we'll gain, which will enable our First Gear to spin of its own accord without us having to chase it.

When we have blockage in our First Gear, we lack the possessions we need in order to live smoothly. This may take the form of starvation or homelessness, or it may mean a lack of friends, or simply a lack of sufficient resources to complete a goal. More possessions, used well under the direction of the lower gears, enable better access to those lower gears. Thus possessions can be powerful tools to facilitate the gain of all layers of intelligence, but only when those possessions are used well. And having been homeless and alone before, Calise and I can vouch for how hard it is to force those lower gears to keep on turning when your First Gear is utterly clogged, no matter how healthy and happy your lower gears may be.

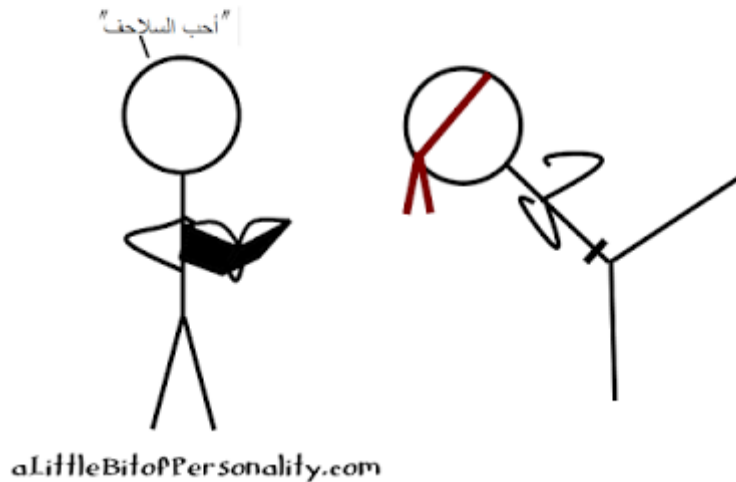
This interplay between the need for healthy lower gears and the need to clear out blockage in higher gears, results in a careful balancing act between the two. In the long term, it is incomparably better to focus always on the lowest gears, since they cause all the gears above them to turn on their own, faster and faster! But when there's too much blockage in the higher gears, it can be difficult or impossible to reach down and benefit from those deep gears. So sometimes it's best to focus first on clearing out blockage before going back to the lower gears. Yet in the end, it really depends on each situation. Sometimes it's worth letting your higher gears accumulate blockage in order to push hard and build momentum in the lowest gears, and sometimes it's far more worth it to clear out the blockage first.

And sometimes, especially when it comes to the First Gear, we tell ourselves that life will be easier if only we can get just a few more possessions, when in reality it will never get easier until we turn from our First Gear and finally pay some attention to our deepest ones. As we develop intelligence in all our gears, we can better discern when we should focus on which.

The Second Gear – Knowledge and Skills

THE SECOND GEAR

Knowledge and Skills



The next gear down is the first that's truly a part of us as who we are, yet still rather superficial. Knowledge is power, and Second Gear knowledge and skills enable far better gain of First Gear possessions. This is still a rather superficial form of intelligence, since even computers can be filled with rote facts or programmed with remarkable skills, yet it's deeper, more effective, and has more lasting benefits than the First Gear. Possessions without knowledge will lead to foolish misuse and loss of those possessions, while knowledge without possessions will find a way to gain possessions. As the Second Gear turns, it causes the First Gear to turn more rapidly than if we focus on turning only the First Gear directly.

This is why it's so much wiser to focus on education than on simply chasing wealth, since more knowledge enables the gain of more wealth. While a college degree is a useful possession, the knowledge gained through education is where the real power is. Better skills open up all kinds of opportunities in every area of life. Likewise, learning social skills is far more effective than constantly chasing popularity. Learning economic principles is much more effective than winning a lump sum of money. And gaining the skills to do well at a job is more permanent than clinging to a title that you can't live up to.

Second Gear skills and knowledge are rote, learned by constant practice. Whether it be knowledge of pop culture references, mathematical theorems, or knowing how to score a goal, the Second Gear is turned through constant practice.

Memorization, drills, and frequent immersion in the skill or knowledge you're trying to gain, all help you turn your Second Gear. Some drills are mental, like flash cards or math exercises, while some are physical, like repeatedly training your muscles to know how to kick a ball, yet in every case, knowledge and skills are something rote and practiced that becomes part of you, which no one can take away. While knowledge and skill can become rusty without practice, they cannot be outright taken, or lost all at once, the way possessions can.

Some people spend their lives in pursuit of more and more knowledge, or more impressive skills, and they're often quite proud of themselves, looking down their noses at "normal people" who chase only possessions. It's good to gain more knowledge; it really enables everything else to go better! But without the direction of the deeper gears, a little knowledge or skill can be dangerous to the user. Without the discipline and maturity of the lower gears, the Second Gear becomes narrow, out of touch, and embarrassingly arrogant. It becomes less useful, less able to really result in actual possessions, and so has to comfort itself by telling itself that even nonfunctional knowledge is better than all those normal people.

But when knowledge and skill are no longer resulting in possessions, that means they're in error. If all your football (or soccer) drills don't make you any more able to shoot a goal, then you can't cling to the hours you've practiced in order to pretend you've been gaining skill. If all your reading of philosophy doesn't make you a better person, then you can't cling to

the sheer number of books you've read in order to pretend you've been gaining usable knowledge. Nonfunctional knowledge and skills are a sign of error, of faulty practicing techniques, or of false ideas, all of which are forms of Second Gear blockage.

When false ideas or techniques get lodged in our Second Gear, it makes it harder to gain more knowledge, because we try to force all new knowledge to fit our false ideas. People with clogged Second Gears cut themselves off from all sorts of powerful skills and knowledge, rejecting any facts or methods that don't fit with what they already believe. As more and more false knowledge and faulty skills creep in, it gets harder and harder to learn anything functional, harder to turn that Second Gear, and so we eventually are left to struggle with only our First Gear. And as always, too much blockage in any gear makes it harder to even touch the gears below it.

It's easy to accuse others of having bad techniques or false beliefs. Yet as we make a determined effort to learn from all sixteen facets of intelligence, we'll be more able to see the dangerous clogs in our own Second Gear, and we'll more readily see how others' "wrong" ideas may in fact have useful lessons we never knew we needed to learn.

The Third Gear – Talents and Habits



Deeper than even knowledge and skill, our habits and our talents enable us to learn faster and more thoroughly. One person may have accumulated vast stores of knowledge, but someone else with good study habits or a better memory will be able to gain more knowledge faster. One person may have practiced to get very good at playing the piano, but someone else with better discipline or more natural talent will be able to improve at the piano much faster. This may seem like cheating, but it's simply a deeper, more effective gear that anyone can learn how to turn.

Most self-improvement methods, from public education to self-help seminars, focus on various forms of knowledge: tips and tricks that are meant to help you improve. This is Second Gear education. For example, if you want to get along better with others, Second Gear methods might tell you to have a firm handshake, look others in the eye, and laugh at their jokes.

These are all rote methods, tips and tricks. Second Gear. And they may seem to work marvelously well for a time, but eventually it will get harder to remember all the different little tricks, and it will come off more and more forced and insincere.

Third Gear habits, however, will help you develop better social habits in general, without shackling you to simplistic tips and tricks.

Yet it's harder to reach down to the Third Gear, and the vast majority of all education methods rely mostly on the Second Gear. There are some teachers who do reach down to help people improve Third Gear habits and develop better natural talent, and they tend to have a lasting impact on all whom they teach. Books written by such teachers are often very popular and genuinely more effective. But because it's harder to reach down to the Third Gear, we often end up believing that habits and talents cannot be taught. That you're either born with natural ability, or you're not. That you're either born a brainiac, with great study habits and a photographic memory, or you're not. When it comes to charisma, or coordination, or dependable work ethic, we sometimes start to believe that some people simply have it while others do not.

And it's true that even zillions of hours of rote practice of the Second Gear will never result in natural ability. The Second Gear does not make the Third Gear turn. And so, when all we rely on is Second Gear rote repetition, we start to think that Third Gear talent is unteachable. But natural talent isn't only innate; it can be taught. All good habits, all talents and gifts and aptitudes can be gained. Your intelligence is not fixed, not on any of your six gears. If you can change your First Gear intelligence by gaining more possessions to help you do more in life, if you can change your Second Gear intelligence by gaining more skills and knowledge, then you can change your Third and even your Sixth Gear. You just have to know how to reach down to it.

Blockage in the higher gears, such as the false ideas and faulty methods that cause Second Gear blockage, makes it much harder to reach down to the Third Gear. So much of Phase 2 is aimed toward helping you clear out your own Second Gear, to better enable you to reach deeper. We're not going to try to tell you what to believe; that won't help anyone. Rather, we're going to supply you with the tools to clean out your own Second Gear on your own, in order to determine for yourself which ideas and methods aren't quite right. Rather than get mired in the mosh pit of people arguing over every topic imaginable, writing books and op-eds and online expressions of opinion, we want to focus on the tools, the basic elements of intelligence, to help you climb out of the mudslinging arena and determine for yourself how to clean your Second Gear.

There's nothing to be gained by choosing sides in a debate where everyone's Second Gears are partially clogged, yet as you unclog your own, you'll be able to see all the ways in which both sides are right, and the ways they're both wrong.

Third Gear blockage, on the other hand, isn't about believing false ideas or employing faulty methods. It's about "bad habits" or behaviors, which can poison the talents and abilities we do have, preventing them from having an effect. A healthy Third Gear turns when good habits and abilities enable the faster gain of Second Gear skills and knowledge. As good habits and talents are developed, the Third Gear turns more, making the gears above it turn even faster than they would on their own. A clogged Third Gear, by contrast, is so mired in self-destructive behaviors and habits that natural talents get sabotaged by unhealthy coping mechanisms, and good habits cannot be developed.

This is the realm of behavioral psychology: treating unhealthy habits and behaviors in order to set the Third Gear free, so it can turn and make all of life go so much better. So much of all psychology is behavioral, focusing on the Third Gear without even knowing it. Oversimplified stereotype, the kind found so often online and in books, is not the same as genuine, powerful behavioral psychology; simplistic stereotype is simply false ideas, or Second Gear blockage. True behavioral psychology instead attempts to find and categorize true knowledge of how the mind causes us to behave, seeking correct Second Gear facts in order to delve down and treat the Third Gear.

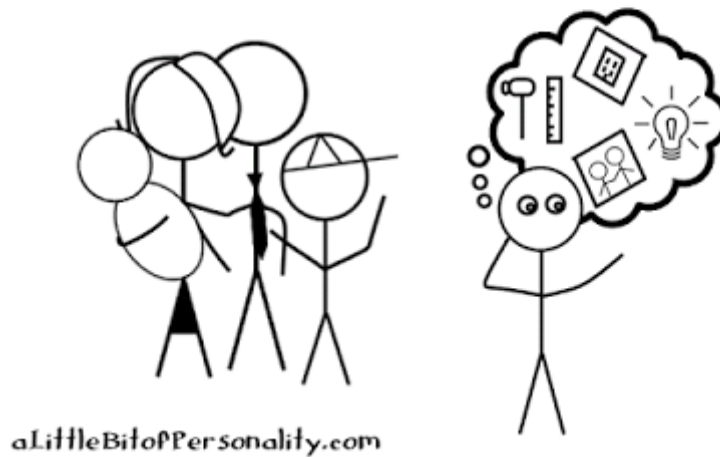
aLBoP Phase 1 isn't about Third Gear behavioral psychology, but this is why we respect genuine behavioral psychology so much. This is also why the false stereotypes make us so irate. The ability to access and treat Third Gear blockage is huge; in a world where most educators seem to assume that Third Gear talents and habits cannot be taught, in a world where some are simply called bad while others are born good, the ability to reach down and turn the Third Gear is of immense significance! It's huge to work toward helping people gain new talents they never had, and grow permanently free of hurtful habits that they've always had to just live with. To really change a person's entire life experience! And stereotypes get in the way of that. They hurt people and make the problem worse, clogging up the Second Gear with spiteful truisms that allow harmful habits to fester all the more on the Third Gear.

So all throughout Phase 2, we're going to explore how you can better turn your own Third Gear. How you can gain and cultivate natural talents you never had, and how you can clear out the habits that hold you down without having to lose the good parts that make you who you are.

The Fourth Gear – Traits and Cognition

THE FOURTH GEAR

TRAITS AND COGNITION



The Fourth Gear turns quietly and often entirely unnoticed beneath all the abilities and habits of the Third Gear. This is where your fundamental traits grow and develop to make you who you are. Having a lot of friends is a First Gear outward possession, knowing good social tricks and skills is Second Gear knowledge, having naturally good social habits is a Third Gear talent, but simply being a good person, a person who cares about and likes others as just a part of who you are, that's an underlying trait on your Fourth Gear. Your Fourth Gear isn't about knowledge or skill, or even habits or natural aptitudes; it's about the basic traits that define who you are.

The peculiarities of your own DNA dictate how your body produces proteins, which in turn result in unique physical, mental, and emotional traits. People sometimes use DNA as a catch-all excuse for everything we do and think, and while that may often be an oversimplification, the blueprints in our DNA are responsible for so much of what defines us. The Fourth Gear of intelligence is as deep as the double helix reaches, though. Genetics influence our mental and emotional traits on our Fourth Gear, many natural aptitudes on our Third, even some instinctual skills on our Second Gear, and outward, easily changeable qualities on our First Gear like our physical appearance. All of these may be changed and developed; genetics are neither a limitation nor a license to be a jerk, they're just a starting point for us to build off of. So while the deepest manifestation of genetic nature is our primary mental and emotional traits on our Fourth Gear, even those traits may be improved or lost depending on how we live.

Genetics aren't the only ingredient on the Fourth Gear, however. The influence of culture and environment plays perhaps an equally pivotal role in forming the traits that make us who we are. The steady, relentless influences of parenting, cultural norms, the friends we hung out with in childhood and even the TV shows we watched growing up, all subtly worked to mold the mental and emotional traits that so strongly steer our lives today, often without us knowing it.

This is where cognitive psychology comes in. As we learn to understand what our minds and hearts already want most, we come to understand our deepest fears and weaknesses, the pressure points that have always held us back, and the secret dreams we never realized we wanted so badly. As we grow to understand the mental and emotional traits that lie beneath all our abilities and behaviors, we naturally grow healthier in both. As our Fourth Gear cognition gets stronger, more consistent, and less self-sabotaging, our Fourth Gear turns, which automatically causes all our Third Gear abilities, habits, and behaviors to improve even faster.

This has been the primary purpose of aLBoP Phase 1: to help you reach all the way down to your Fourth Gear and turn it, clearing out blockage and improving the very traits that make you the person you've always been. Fourth Gear blockage takes the form of mental and emotional blocks in your mind itself. As you grow to understand your cognition, the way you've already always approached everything, the longstanding blockages in your psyche naturally melt away. This makes you simply happier, more effective, and more able as all your higher gears turn more easily.

Yet while few teachers tend to be able to reach down and turn the Third Gear, relying instead on Second Gear knowledge and skills, it can seem almost impossible to get all the way down to the Fourth Gear. Our genetic nature and our cultural nurturing help or hinder our Fourth Gear without us knowing, and every experience and every thought and desire ends up either turning our Fourth Gear or blocking it up. Our environment and our cognition affect our Fourth Gear constantly, and yet

it can seem daunting to access it and turn it intentionally. How does one reach down past skills and knowledge, past even natural ability and talent, down to the very traits that make us who we are?

In these six layers of intelligence, each gear can be accessed only by means of the gear directly above it. If you want to intentionally develop good Third Gear habits and talents, then accurate knowledge is required to show you how. Accurate Second Gear knowledge and skill can show you the way to develop new Third Gear habits and abilities. Likewise, having access to First Gear books, teachers, or other sources of information or experience enables the gain of Second Gear skills and knowledge. So in order to reach the Fourth Gear, it isn't enough to have Second Gear knowledge of how it works. Only by developing better Third Gear behaviors can we intentionally turn our Fourth Gear traits.

This is why it's been so important for us to clear up stereotypes and misconceptions about cognition. It's not the Second Gear mistaken facts that are a danger; it's the Third Gear harmful habits and limitations that come from the false stereotypes. Such Third Gear blockage, making you feel limited, small, or worthless, makes it impossible for you to reach your Fourth Gear. So for these past few years, it's been so exciting to see how correct knowledge about how the mind works (Second Gear) causes happier, healthier behaviors (Third Gear), which result in clearer, more powerful cognition, both mentally and emotionally (Fourth Gear).

Likewise, only by exercising the Fourth Gear can we ever even begin to access the deeper Fifth Gear. And the Fifth Gear is really exciting; it's kinda our Phase 2 Secret Weapon. This is why Phase 1 had to come first, with its Fourth Gear focus on cognition, so that you could be ready for Phase 2 and the Fifth Gear! This is why Phase 2 is a whole other kettle of beans, so let's go on now and look at the central focus of Phase 2, the thing that this whole intro has been building up to: The Fifth Gear.